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AH considers greener cremation solutions, memorial stones

THOMAS SMITH
Journalist

Last November, the Haliburton County Master Gardeners were approved for a planting plan at St. Stephen's Cemetery in Stanhope. In April of 2025, staff notified council that they were unsuccessful in receiving grant approval for the project. Sarah Hutson, deputy clerk, brought forward the option to collaborate with AWAKE in developing a cremation plot and scattering garden.

"There is a very strong request for cremations," said Hutson.

Currently, cremated remains are not permitted in the green burial section of the cemetery.

With the skyrocketing demand for cremations across Canada, AH is feeling pressure from interested parties in allowing cremated remains to be placed in the green burial area.

Cremated remains are not the most environmentally friendly method of post-mortem care, as they leave remains with high sodium and high pH. Traditional cremations also give off a lot of emissions and require a massive amount of energy throughout the process.

Hutson was listening to *Common Ground: Bereavement Sector Chats*, a podcast made by the Ontario Association of Cemetery and Funeral Professionals. In the episode titled *Sustainability and Eco-Friendly Funeral Trends,* Amanda Kelly, an environmental advocate and co-founder of AWAKE discussed sustainable and eco-friendly burial, cremation, and funeral trends. This May, AH staff met with Kelly to discuss options for their cemeteries. In this meeting, they learned about AWAKE's patented soil product that converts cremated remains into usable, healthy soil. The company also offers a Municipal Cemetery Adoption Program which assists with creating scattering gardens.

Issues arose due to a small section of the land in the cemetery being held in case AH decides to build a columbarium or other feature in the future.

Algonquin Highlands Mayor Liz Danielsen recommended that due to the strong philosophy of the Green Burial Society, AH could introduce eco-friendly methods with scattering cremated remains at other locations away from St. Stephen's.

Several council members agreed with Danielsen's statement.

"If we think the scattering gardens or other options are a good idea, given the limitations of land that we have got, that may come back to us looking at other locations."

Danielsen said that St. Peter's and Maple Lake may be suitable sites for eco-friendly cremation options.

"If there is a space in one of the other cemeteries where we can pilot this, I would much prefer to have our first go at it in one of those cemeteries." said deputy mayor Jennifer Dailloux.

No memorial features exist at the green burial site yet.

"We would like to do some planting this fall around the gazebo this fall, even if it means that we have to buy the plants," said Danielsen.

A bylaw review would need to be done before creating a scattering garden, says Hutson.

Hutson noted that she has an idea of an appropriate space for a scattering garden at St. Peter's cemetery.

"I think that's a suitable option," said

see MEMORIAL page 12

Sweet songs of summer
Musician Sydney Mae performed at Boshkung Brewing Co. in Minden this past weekend, bringing her unique sound to the outdoor patio. /TIM YANO staff photographer

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A floatplane lays overturned in Head Lake after a violent storm swept through Haliburton Village on July 24. /ADAM FRISK staff

Haliburton Village on July 24, destroying multiple tents set up for the Art and Craft Festival at Head Lake Park.

Violent storm rips through Haliburton County

ADAM FRISK

Journalist

A tornado-warned storm swept through Haliburton County last week, toppling trees, overturning aircraft and knocking out power for thousands of hydro customers.

The storm system moved into the area on the evening of July 24, bringing with it violent winds and torrential rain.

Severe thunderstorm watches and warnings were issued Thursday afternoon. As the system approached the region, a tornado warning was issued for the area just before 6:30 p.m. with the weather alert ringing out on cellphones throughout the county.

"Take immediate cover in a basement or interior room if weather threat approaches," read the alert. "Shelter from flying debris if outside."

The warning came as many vendors were setting up tents at Head Lake Park for the Haliburton Art and Craft Festival.

"Most of the destruction happened from the wind, before there was even rain," artist Nicole Gagnon said shortly after the storm. "We had a ton of weight on our booth but it got dragged."

Several tents were picked up by the storm and tossed like ragdolls across the park.

"I could see dust and wind blowing right over and I came around the corner and saw that our booth was gone," artist Sean Olsthoorn said.

Luckily they didn't have artwork already set up in the booth.

"We decided we weren't going to put our art out until tomorrow because we knew of the potential storm," Gagnon explained. "Our tent is all the way over there in the graveyard of tents."

Fortunately, many of the artists who were setting up for the festival were able to seek shelter, preventing anyone from sustaining any injuries.

"We knew it was coming, I got the alert from the federal government, so we thought 'OK here it comes, let's be on alert," said Laurie Jones, curator and executive director of Rails End Gallery and Arts Centre. "That calm before the storm, and when that comes, it was coming fast, we need to get into the gallery."

Jones opened the gallery for the artists and their families to shelter in place as the storm roared through the area.

"We had them come and shelter in the gallery, leave their tents which they were still setting up and then watch their tent get collapsed," she said. "So now we have all their stuff in the gallery drying out."

Several tents were either collapsed or swept away by the storm but thankfully no injuries were reported at Head Lake Park.

"Surprising how fierce it was," Jones said in the wake of the weather event. "And quick. We watched inside as a tent blew up and started banging against the building. That was spectacular."

Jones said the art festival was set to continue as planned and had put a call out for volunteers to help with the clean up and to provide any available tents to help support the festival. However, admittedly she noted that some artists had packed up for the weekend.

On Friday, many residents were seen picking up debris from their property, cutting away broken tree limbs and picking up shingles. By late Sunday afternoon, power was restored to much of the area.

As for the Art and Craft Festival, entrances opened slightly ahead of schedule on Friday with about 1,300 people attending on day one alone.

"It's been great," Jones said Sunday afternoon. "Everyone has been struck with how great this community is and how kind and helpful the people who came on Thursday night to help."

Early estimates put attendance for the three-day festival at more than 4,000 guests attending the annual outdoor event.

A total of five out of the 100 vendors were unable to carry one with the show due to storm damage.

Environment and Climate Change Canada had yet to confirm whether a tornado did in fact touch down in the area.

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An artist reacts after a violent storm swept through Haliburton Village on July 24, destroying multiple tents set up for the Art and Craft Festival at Head Lake Park.

A tree fell on Invergordon Road in Minden due to the storm. /THOMAS SMITH Staff

Storm clouds over West Guilford, where the power remained out for the majority of the weekend. /submitted

A rainbow appears after a violent storm swept through Haliburton Village on July 24, destroying multiple tents set up for the Art and Craft Festival at Head Lake Park. /ADAM FRISK staff

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The Burden family in West Guilford. /submitted

Remembering Bill, a friend to all

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

The notable trait that stood out when I asked people about Bill Burden, was the tense in which they spoke of him.

While the long-time resident of West Guilford and the heart and soul of their shopping centre passed away in June, his actions didn't seem to be a thing of the past. "He is one of the sweetest men I've ever met," said his daughter, Cori. "And I'm not just saying that because he's my dad."

A slip of the tongue, a momentary lapse. But describing Bill in the present tense tells me one thing: that his personality, his love, his dedication, and his commitment to community care lives on.

And it always will.

William "Bill" Burden grew up in Newfoundland. "So he had that East Coast way to him," Cori laughed. "Always welcoming everyone." He moved to the area as a teenager, before heading to Niagara Falls to work at a winery.

Along the way, Bill met the love of his life, Edna. Don't worry, there's more on their sweet love story later on in the article …

Edna had ties to the Haliburton Highlands, and the young couple knew they wanted to raise a family in a small town, so they made the move to West Guilford with two kids in tow: Cori and Chad. The family lived above the West Guilford Shopping Centre for years.

"We used to joke about it all the time," laughed Cori. "Dad would have us working late in the store. We all worked it as a family."

And it wasn't just his family he employed. "He treated all his staff like family," said Cori. "He always hired local kids. He gave them a chance to get their starts in the community."

One of those local kids was Jaime Bilodeau. "In my teens I worked cutting wild game for Bill and Chad," she chuckled. "By my 20s, Bill trusted me to bake for the store. I was horrible at it. Thankfully he hired my best friend Angie to do that, because she's way better than I ever was. But Bill never let on, he just encouraged me to burn less things."

Bill and his best friend, Dick Schell. "Friends Forever" is what Schell captioned the photo. The two used to call one another every day for years. /submitted

Bilodeau noted that at one point, she was in desperate need of housing. "I was financially strapped and working a billion part time jobs," she recalled, noting that Bill and Edna rented the apartment above the store to her, in an effort to help her out. "He was selfless, he would go above and beyond for his community."

But few knew Bill better than his best friend, Dick Schell.

The two met in 1962, in their Grade 12 year at Haliburton Highlands Secondary School. "We automatically became friends," Schell said. They became attached at the hip. After graduating high school, they both worked at General Motors in Whitby, before Bill moved on to the winery in the Niagara area. But he would continue driving back to the Haliburton Highlands on weekends for visits.

One day, a family friend of Schell's noted that their daughter, Edna (see, I told you we would come back around), was working in the city, but was looking for a ride back to the Highlands on a regular basis. Schell introduced Bill and Edna, who would ride share back and forth between city and country.

By 1970 they were married.

The rest is history. Schell married his sweetheart, Carole Anne, and the two couples became inseparable. Every opportunity they had to be together, they would be. Holidays, family vacations, road trips across the country. "Every day until 2023, Bill would call me every single day of the week," said Schell. "We just wanted to check in on one another. It was just as natural as getting up every day."

In August of 1983, Bill and Edna moved back from the Niagara area to purchase the West Guilford Shopping Centre. Carole Anne still has the date circled on a faded 1983 calendar; written with excitement in green marker. A date they would never forget.

"Bill was as close as any family member I'd ever had," said Schell. "He is family."

Jaime Bilodeau agreed. "Since Bill was the main proprietor for many of us at that end of the county, he was known by many and loved by all," she said. "And he wanted to see us succeed."

By 2023, Bill was up against a series of medical challenges, including a number of strokes and Parkinson's disease. "But really it didn't stop him," said Cori. "He was convinced he would keep going. My dad was many things, including very stubborn," she laughed.

On June 27, Bill passed peacefully at Extendicare in Haliburton, a place where his warmth and care shone through, and the staff treated him like family. At his funeral, over 600 came to pay their respects. "There were so many I didn't know there," said Cori. "People whose lives he touched. So many. And I didn't even realize it."

And while the phone lines now stay silent, the daily phone calls absent between the lifelong friends, Schell says he still feels Bill around. "He's my best friend," he said. "We'll be friends forever."

Because big personalities - the ones fuelled by heart and soul and a deep care that echoes in their bones - are bigger than any life could hold. His personality, his love, his dedication, and his commitment to community care lives on.

So while Bill may be gone, to the community, in many ways, he's still here.

And always will be.

PWHL players take to the ice with Hockey Haven campers

ADAM FRISK
Journalist

Some lucky Haliburton Hockey Haven campers took to the ice last week with a couple of members of the Professional Women's Hockey League (PWHL.)

Toronto Sceptres' Emma Woods and PWHL Vancouver's Emma Greco were on hand when Hockey Haven campers hit the ice at A.J. LaRue Arena on July 21.

"We've had a significant increase in female campers over the years, so we wanted to do something special so we reached out to some PWHL players," Connor Graham, the camp's hockey director, said.

Graham explained that this week alone, 30 of the 70 kids attending the camp are girls.

"We have a week in August where we have more girls attending the camp than boys," he said.

Both Woods and Greco said it was phenomenal to hear about the increase with girls attending Hockey Haven.

"I mean, it's amazing," Woods said. "There's so many girls in our league who do girls hockey camps now and they're selling out and there's waitlists to attend.

"The girls hockey registration numbers are up, like way up, in the last couple of years," the Sceptres forward said.

Woods went on to explain how things have changed for girls in hockey compared to what her early days in the sport were like.

"I grew up in a small town and had to play with boys, but I always thought that it was my normal," she said. "But, like I had to get changed in a first-aid closet but I never really thought twice, I was just a hockey player, I made it work.

"But now, even where I grew up, there's a girls team now and not just girls joining boys teams," Woods said.

Greco, who grew up in Burlington, was fortunate enough to have girls teams already established but never there would be an opportunity to go far with the sport.

"When I was growing up there was never even a thought that I'd be going to play hockey in the states," Greco said. "It's much different now, I would say, with the opportunities and the training."

The PWHL was founded in August 2023, and its inaugural season played in 2024. It began with the "Original Six" teams: Boston, Minnesota, Montreal, New York, Ottawa, and Toronto. Expansion teams Seattle and Vancouver are set to enter the league this year.

"Playing pro for women's hockey is a motivator now, it's a dream" Woods said. "It's what little girls and college girls can look towards, which didn't exist for us."

After signing autographs for the campers who were previously on the ice, the PWHLers laced up and worked with the young hockey players through various drills set out by the Hockey Haven pros.

Toronto Sceptres' Emma Woods and PWHL Vancouver's Emma Greco sign autographs prior to hitting the ice with Haliburton Hockey Haven campers on July 21. /ADAM FRISK staff

PWHL Vancouver's Emma Greco educates a Haliburton Hockey Haven camper.

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CANADIAN COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER AWARD 2018

Published by **White Pine Media Corp**

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Print Subscriptions 1 yr/ $51 (taxes included). Published weekly by White Pine Media
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It's here

Editorial

Emily Stonehouse

IF THERE'S one thing that stops us in our tracks, it's the weather.

We can be looking forward to the next event, next show, next memory to be made, but suddenly, all plans are out the window.

It's happened to us a number of times this year already. Ice, wind, snow, sleet, droughts, fires, floods.

Does it seem to be occurring more than usual? Maybe. Is it a direct result of climate change? More than likely.

I once read a quote that said: "Climate change will manifest as a series of disasters viewed through phones with footage that gets closer and closer to where you live until you›re the one filming it."

That stuck with me. As a result of the speed in which social media can sound the alarm bells, many of us are experiencing climate change simultaneously, even if it's not in our own backyards.

This urgency can present two dichotomizing realities as we digest the information: either we form a wall of ambivalence while we are desensitized by the onslaught, or, alternatively, a level of empathy is brought to the surface, a warmth around a shared human experience.

Everyone will interpret this differently.

But as we saw yet another storm ravage our community last week, it's apparent that kindness came first. The quick spurt of ferocious winds gobbled up and spit out dozens of tents eagerly set up by artists in Head Lake Park, diligently propping up their booths for the Art and Craft Festival - an event that brings thousands to the county.

Immediately, a call to action was made. Canoe FM took to the air asking for community support and shared tents. By early the next morning, municipal staff were picking up branches through the parking lots, volunteers steadily streaming into the park grounds.

It shakes us, these events. We saw the event happening through our phone, but this time, we were also close enough to drive down and lend a helping hand.

It's not just wildfires in gulping up cities we've never been to, floods decimating towns we've never heard of.

It's here.

I've always thought that the best offense is a good defence.

But we're past that point now. While there are some actions we can do that gradually chip away at the grumbling and groaning elephant in the room that is climate change, the bulk of the problems are not in our hands.

It's not just reusable straws and composting. The decisions around climate change are held in the palms of few; those with more money than most of us could ever fathom, yet choosing the wrong outlets to cache that cash. Filling the voids of their egos instead of the cups held in the hands of our children.

We can try. We can do our part. Little by little. As a community, we can continue to show up when these natural disasters strike. Kindness can come to the forefront. A call to action, a cry for help. We can experience ambivalence or empathy or anything in between.

But above all, we must know that it's a reality. It's here. Ice, wind, snow, sleet, droughts, fires, floods. We must be prepared, for whatever comes next.

Make love not war

Poke, Peel Pair, Ponder

Fay Martin

I THINK IT must be hard to be a man these days, particularly a young man. I wonder why young men as a sector are attracted to right-leaning politics, which was the trend in our recent election as elsewhere in the world. Particularly those we used to call blue-collar workers who for generations were the backbone of left-leaning and labour parties. I get that they feel left-out of progress they have been socialized to believe is theirs by right – secure and well-paying jobs, home ownership, economic security, benefits and pensions. But women are equally disadvantaged generationally, arguably further disadvantaged by gender, and they seem to be trending centre and left electorally.

I wonder if it's because the role of the male in most species is to sire offspring and, in a few species, to ensure their survival by protecting the female. On the farm where I was raised, the long-term value of female over male livestock and fowl was clearly evident, which is maybe why feminism came easily to me. I always suspected that patriarchy was man's way of compensating for this inherent disadvantage. That bias colours my understanding of why the world is lurching toward Strong Man dictatorship and war: both are the play pen – or wrestling ring, if you will – of men seeking to justify their existence.

I recently read the first two of Pat Barker's trilogy about the women of Troy. She continues her lacerating exploration of war from a woman's perspective (the *Regeneration Trilogy*, which deals with the Second World War, is sustaining its relevance) by taking that lens to more ancient, arguably more brutal, war. In theory the Trojan War was initiated by a disagreement about who rightfully owned a woman who was so beautiful men could not be blamed for laying down their lives for her – presumably ten years of war and the prolonged butchery of men of all ages was at base her fault. Women, then as now, were the spoils of war, chattels who were meted out as prizes to the heroes of the day, destined to be bed-slaves to the men who had murdered their sons, their brothers, their fathers, and to ambivalently bear their children. From Barker's perspective, those consequences of war were difficult, but perhaps more easily managed than the consequences of war for men. Why? Because the women could find purpose in life, even as a slave, but a man's career of hand-to-hand, close-up, relentless butchery destroyed their humanity. Their lives, as I understand Barker describing them, are tantamount to manning the killing floor in an abattoir, and trying to wash the stink from their bodies at the end of the day.

Is modern warfare different? I think about what it might be like to be an Israel Defence Force soldier protecting a humanitarian shipment of food from starving children and mothers. Or a Hamas military taking refuge behind the skirts of grandmothers and under the beds of hospital patients. I think it might be even worse than wielding a spear or club like Achilles, because he at least could demonstrate skill and perseverance, and earn the commendation of his fellow fighters. How does an American military person take pride in pushing a button in a subterranean silo in Arizona that pinpoints a drone's designated enemy and blows him and everyone around him to smithereens?

And those are just the wars we follow closely. Are the civil wars that have devastated Africa for decades any more humane? Adam Gopnik, a Canadian, in a recent article in *The New Yorker* (*A Time to Kill,* April 28/25) reconsiders the American Civil War in which fathers and sons, brothers and cousins, faced off against each other across a killing field over, in the end, the abandoned cause of slavery. Gopnik suggests, subtly, that Canadians and their American relatives might face a similar dilemma in the imaginable future.

For what? So that men can feel their existence is justified? We are looking for leadership to usher us away from this brink, and I agree that the face of it is better male, but I also think that the crux of it is female. Women have always led from behind – not solely, but primarily, and perhaps most productively. We raise our sons and nurture our husbands to rise above their testosterone. We teach them to be accountable to the goodness of their natures, not by criticizing every idea they ever had, not by playing Gotcha! with a vengeance, but by bolstering the positive at every opportunity.

I think doubling down on that is the next wave of feminism. Time to put our egos in our jean pockets and do the necessary. It's an odd variation on the 60s mantra of Make Love Not War, but it deserves consideration.

points of view

I'm just Ken

Loon Tales

Steve Galea

"LOOK BIG," I told Jenn. "Show no fear. Whatever you do, don't run."

But when I looked over to give Jenn a reassuring look, she was nowhere to be seen.

That left me alone to face one of the most fearsome creatures on the planet – a four-year-old girl bearing a Barbie Doll.

"Wanna play Barbie with me, Oompah?" My granddaughter Casey said.

"Where's your brother?" I asked, without making eye contact.

Suddenly, I heard scurrying from under the couch. And then I saw a blur running down the stairs towards the basement.

"Come back here you cowards!" I yelled.

Twenty minutes later, Casey and I were still trying to decide whether Barbie should wear the summer dress or the red swimsuit. Don't even get me started about her dogs, Lulu and Broderick.

This was on day five of a six-day visit from my grandkids. The good news was that my toenails were still unpainted. The bad news is I had to sleep sometime.

I have spent around a week a summer with Hudson, my eight-year-old – or, as he says, almost-nine-year-old— grandson for the last four years. But this was the first time with Casey.

Like all four-year-old grandkids, Casey is at the height of her special powers. Just one look from those big eyes along with a well-practiced smile, and next thing you know Oompah is pretending to be a puppy for the next hour – which is fine if you don't mind the constant fetching or rolling over.

It's actually fun for the first five minutes.

Having said that, I don't think enough is written about the subtle fright factor inherent in a four-year-old girl carrying a naked Barbie. The inexperienced among you might say, "Hold it! Four-year-old boys are terrifying too!"

Well, yes. But they are predictable, loud, and basically a blunt object – especially when they run face first into trees, furniture, or random appliances. They'll carry dead things in their back pockets, break things just to see them break, throw rocks at things they shouldn't, have meaningful relationships with: frogs, snakes, and, if you let them, skunks. They'll sprint, jump, or try to juggle expensive things that are fragile that they were told not to touch. But ... they always give you fair warning with sentences like "Oompah, watch this!" or brake-screeching sounds.

Essentially, a four-year-old boy is incapable of sneaking up on anything.

Not so with a four-year-old girl. Four-year-old girls just suddenly appear silhouetted in your peripheral vision. And, though they always look cute, they can be startling, and, in the wrong light, you'd swear you are in one of those horror movies.

Most times this illusion is dispelled, by a beautiful little smile and a request for a hug or a cookie, but sometimes, they can just send a chill down your spine.

If you doubt any of this, watch your cat.

When the little boy enters the room, a cat will scowl, maybe close its ears a bit, possibly assume a defensive posture, but otherwise stay put – unless, of course, the kid is carrying a home-made parachute. When a little girl suddenly appears in the room, however, a cat will turn inside out and almost beat your wife and grandson to the basement.

It's not your granddaughter. They're wonderful.

It's the Barbie.

Is there an important lesson here?

Well, yes. I learned that she looks better in the summer dress, until she goes to the beach party with Lulu and Broderick. Then, it's time for the red swimsuit and the sunglasses …

pic *of the* past

This week's pic of the past was submitted by Wayd Paull of Lindsay, who was born and raised in Haliburton. The picture is of his dad Garnet Paull and his team of horses at the Cooperage. The Cooperage was a local sawmill in Eagle Lake that employed a great number of men from the surrounding area. The photo's believed to be in the late 1940s to early 1950s. /file

Gifts from the garden

Tales from the great Green meadow

Lynda Shadbolt

WE JUST started to use our last braid of garlic from our 2024 harvest. We are always grateful that we can grow enough to last a year. Nothing compares to home grown, organic garlic. At the same time, my husband, Jim, is harvesting our 2025 crop. He pulls it, cleans it and braids it. He gives a lot away to friends and we keep enough for ourselves.

Jim also helps his brother harvest his large crop in Orillia, and the two brothers keep some and sell some. We eat a lot of garlic and I thank the earth that grows it, and the farmer that harvests it every time I peel a clove to make a salad dressing or to start a meal. Mary Oliver, in her *Upstream: Selected Essays* says this: "I would say that there exists a thousand unbreakable links between each of us and everything else, and that our dignity and our chances are one. The farthest star and the mud at our feet are family, and there is no decency or sense in honouring one and not the other."

I love this. All of life matters. We come back to this idea again and again. Of course we get the benefit of the garlic as we eat it every day. But the benefit is actually much bigger.

It is a 10-month project of love that Jim takes on every year. In the fall he prepares the beds for the cloves. He plants them and covers them with straw. In the spring we all monitor the growth of the plants daily. Jim harvests the scapes and we make pesto. In early August he harvests the bulbs and prepares them to be stored for the year, in our home and for our friends. Jim gives his time and energy to the garden and the garlic and in return he gets many gifts of being outside, of digging in the dirt, of watching the birds and listening to them as he digs. He gets lots of time with our dog, who keeps him company whenever he is busy planting or digging. Neighbours often drop by and chat as he works.

My mom and I help him throughout the process. Us and our friends all anticipate the harvest and the gifting of the braids. Maybe one of the biggest gifts we get is that we put down our phones and turn off our computers and spend time outside in all kinds of weather. Undistracted. Present with the earth and the food that it provides. Present with all of life. Jenny Uglow said: "We may think we are nurturing our garden, but of course it's our garden that is really nurturing us." The whole process can be felt as many gifts. We give what we can and in return we receive thanks in many ways. We grow garlic. Others grow lettuce and share. Some drop off salads or muffins. Some make us salsa or pumpkin loaves. It is a gift economy. Maybe that is the biggest gift of all.

The show must go on!

Despite the challenges that arose from a sudden storm on Thursday evening, vendors moved ahead with their booths at the annual Art and Craft show in Head Lake Park. The three-day event saw thousands come into the village over the hot weekend.
/TIM YANO staff photographer

Artist Blake Richardson shares his process for creating. /TIM YANO staff photographer

Red Butt Ceramics shows off their wide variety of mugs and drinking vessels in their booth.

Tsz Ling (Elaine) Yeung, the creator of 20 Jewellery, at her booth at the Art and Craft Festival over the weekend.

Minden Memories

The last run of CNR Train M389 from Lindsay to Haliburton paused at Burnt River Station on September 3, 1960, briefly blocking the main street as it waited to continue north. /Photo courtesy of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre

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Book of the Week

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In 1956, Ruth Handler pitches a bold new idea: a doll designed not just to play house, but to inspire girls to dream bigger than ever before.

As Ruth assembles her team of creative rebels she knows they're working against a ticking clock to get this wild idea off the ground.

In the decades to come – through soaring heights and devastating personal lows, public scandals and private tensions – each member of Ruth's team will have to decide how tightly to hold on to their creation. Because Barbie has never been just a doll—she's a legacy.

Let's Call Her Barbie by Renée Rosen is available to borrow from the Haliburton County Public Library.

Schoolhouse pop-up brings history and charm

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

A setting can tell the story.

That's truly what artist April Gates believes.

Nestled into her home and studio in the heart of Gelert, she sits on her front porch as a warm breeze whispers through the branches, her students on lunch break off to the side of the property, sunlight dappling through the wooded canopy.

It's a property where many have made memories.

And it's rich with Haliburton County history.

The property is home to the Donald Schoolhouse, built in 1906. The building has never been moved, and sits on the original footprint, exactly where it was built. The one room schoolhouse welcomed hundreds of children at the turn of the century, before being decommissioned in the 1960s and turned into a church, and later a community centre.

A gathering space for many over the decades.

Gates called the schoolhouse 'home' 10 years ago, after admitting that she swooned over the well-known property between Haliburton and Minden every time she drove past.

Once she settled into the space, it wasn't long before the idea for a pop-up market started to take shape. But it wasn't until the COVID-19 pandemic hit that Gates was able to move ahead with the initiative. "As a living, working artist, so many of our possibilities were cancelled during that time," Gates recalled. "But we could still do outdoor events, and did what we could to offer that safely."

The banner team at the Schoolhouse, ready for another pop-up market this weekend. /submitted

That was six years ago. And back by popular demand, the event has run every year since. Sometimes welcoming returning vendors, and often bringing brand new ones to the community, Gates makes an effort to include anyone aligned with the vision of the small-scale market.

Generally garnering interest from over 400 visitors over the long weekend market, the event is working its way up to signature status. "It was cultivated by being able to adapt," said Gates. "And it brings back the days of the old-timey markets."

Gates will host 10 to 12 vendors on her property, with each offering a different medium or area of interest. With textiles, ceramics, visual artists, jewellery, and more, there's something for everyone.

Even if it's a quick visit to the historic site. "Being the steward to a historical property, it's an ongoing project," noted Gates. "I would love for it to continue to grow."

As for her own artistic journey, Gates shared that her ceramics work is ever-changing and shifting, with the context of her creations built in a space that has shared so many stories. "My work is a constant evolution," she said. "We've become a destination studio, and I've been able to delve into more areas of interest."

On top of her own work as well as hosting the upcoming Schoolhouse market, Gates spends much of her time teaching pottery classes out of the studio, tucked off to the side of her home. What started as some small interest she was receiving from locals has quickly turned into intrigue from across North America, as she welcomes guests from Quebec, B.C., and all across the United States. "They were all just lit up being here," she said. "They just loved the property."

The Schoolhouse pop-up market will take place on Aug. 2 and 3, from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. each day. The event will run rain or shine, but Gates encourages visitors to check out Blackbird Pottery on social media for further updates.

"I would love to develop the property more, and continue to grow here," she said. "It's steeped in so many stories I don't even know yet."

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Submitted by Andrew Brown

Boys 10-13

Danielle Chambers - Girls 10-11 - White Team

Kenna Coulter, Gemma Fahrun, Veda Stichnothe - Girls 7-9 Silver Team

Ander Brown - Boys 7-9 - Purple Team

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MVPs

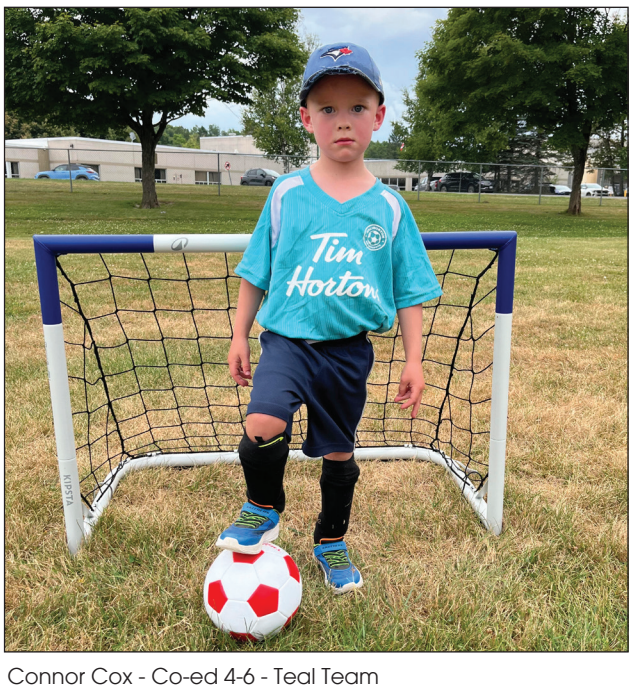
Aliyah Cox - Girls 10-11 - Navy Team

Elsie Webb - Co-ed 4-6 - Kiwi Team

Noah Barry & Rome Hicks - Boys 7-9 - White Team

Jesse Lowes - White Team

Inga Russell - Girls 7-9 - Purple Team



Connor Cox - Co-ed 4-6 - Teal Team

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- Houston Aluminum Dock, Lakeside Storage Shed
- Extensive Decking, Panoramic Lake Views, Sunroom

WHITE LAKE $1,194,900

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KUSHOG LAKE $924,900

- 3 Bedroom Open Concept 3 Season Cottage at Waters Edge
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- Waterfront Deck, Deep Water off Docks End or Walk in Entry Area
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BOB LAKE $824,900

- 3 Bedroom, 3 Bath, 1.5 Storey Cottage
- 158 Ft Clean Deep Waterfront, SRA Owned
- Full Basement with Walkout to Yard, Workshop Area
- 2 Bunkies, 3 Sheds, Childrens Play Station, No Grass Cutting
- Turn Key Ready Including Water Toys and ATV

FOUR MILE LAKE $799,900

- 3 Bedroom Open Concept Cottage with Sleeping Loft
- Clean wade-In Shoreline & Deep Water off Dock
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- Boathouse with Topside Deck to Enjoy the Views
- Spring Fed Lake, Close to Amenities

KENNISIS RIVER $739,900

- 3 + 1 Bedroom, 2 Bath Home
- Level Lot, Sandy Shoreline, Covered Deck
- Master with Private Waterside Deck
- Double Garage, Separate Workshop
- Full Finished Basement

TWELVE MILE LAKE $599,900

- Year Round Cottage on Desired 3 Lake Chain
- Clean Natural Shoreline, Expansive Views
- Screened Haliburton Room, Lakeside Deck
- Insulated & Heated Bunkie, Lakeside Shed
- Year Round Access, Comes As Viewed

BOSHKUNG LAKE $500,000

- 188 Feet Frontage on Prestigious Lake
- Expansive Southwest Views, Rock & Sand Shoreline
- Ideal Building Site for Walkout Basement
- Easy Level Access, Close to Amenities
- Lakeside Deck and Shed, Price + HST

GULL LAKE $299,900

- 2.66 Acre Building Lot on Desired Lake
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AH opts to appoint deputy mayor

THOMAS SMITH
Journalist

"To me, it is important, this is something we consider," said Mayor Liz Danielsen, noting that she has continued to bring up the Deputy Mayor election for the past 15 years.

"This [position] should be someone who is elected at large but there are an awful lot of implications," said Danielsen.

Ward Three Councillor Jennifer Dailloux joined AH council in 2018 and was made Deputy Mayor in 2022.

In March of 2000, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing issued a restructuring of municipalities within Haliburton County. Notably, the Deputy Head of Council shall be appointed by Council from among the members of Council.

"Pursuant to section 186(2) of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O., 2001, as amended, a municipality may exercise its powers, in addition to other matters, to change the composition of Council and establish, change or dissolve wards before or after an order of the Minister has been made," cites Dawn Newhook, clerk and deputy CAO of AH in a report to council.

In her report to council, Newhook outlined five options for council to consider which included the deputy mayor position remaining at-large and council composition remaining at five, the deputy mayor position being elected at large and becoming the sixth seat in the composition of AH Council, the deputy mayor position is elected at large and becomes the sixth seat with the councillor at-large position being created (reducing Ward 2 representation to one), removal of the ward system for the at-large system, and to keep the status quo and change nothing.

"I agree 100 per cent that the public should have a say in how we go about this," said Ward One Councillor Julia Shortreed.

"I don't see the need for it in the size of municipality that we have here," said Ward Two Councillor Lisa Barry. "It has come to council every term that we consider doing this and each time it has not been supported."

Barry also noted that she does not want to add another person to council and reduce Stanhope councillors to one.

"I think that a survey would tell us exactly what we know, that the township would like to have a say in the vote of the deputy mayor," said Ward Two Councillor Sabrina Richards. "I don't think Stanhope would agree that they should be reduced by one because a majority of the population is represented in Stanhope and I don't think that Dorset or Oxtongue will want their boundaries changed. I don't see what a survey would give us that we don't already know."

Danielsen says that a survey would be a helpful thing to do, but that council would need to approve of it before it reaches the public.

After extensive debate, council opted for the fifth option presented, to stick with the status quo and have the deputy mayor appointed by council after an election.

Memorial stones still up for debate

from page 1

Hutson. "We can look at St. Stephen's down the road."

Danielsen says that there is an interest to have the Master Gardeners proceed with their planting at St. Stephen's cemetery, but not in the area that they have put aside.

At the same council meeting, questions and answers regarding green burials were approved for AH's township website.

Council also discussed the possibility of a community event to open the green burial section of St. Stephen's Cemetery.

"I cannot see having an opening ceremony until the memorial stone is in the place," said Danielsen. "To me, it'd just be wrong."

With a founding member of the Green Burial Society being buried in the green burial section already, Danielson expressed expedition to decide on what the memorial stone will look like.

Councillor Sabrina Richards said that before they can decide whether they purchase one or two memorial stones, they are going to need to see some visual designs before deciding. Council also needs to consider the number of plots available in the cemetery to ensure there is enough space for recognition on the stone.

With the disagreements on the size of monument stone needed, a visual design is needed to progress the discussion.

Listen to the music

Sydney Mae took to the patio at Boshkung Brewing Co. in Minden this past weekend, with songs that had the audience engaged and listening. Boshkung continues to offer a number of live musicians over the course of the summer, who perform on their outdoor seating area. Below, Mae's CDs for sale in her pop-up suitcase.
/TIM YANO staff photographer

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CIVIC HOLIDAY CLOSURE

The following Township of Minden Hills offices will be closed on Monday, August 4, 2025, to celebrate the Civic Holiday.

- Municipal Administration Office (7 Milne St.)
- Fire Hall Administration Office (12418 Hwy. 35)
- Minden Hills Cultural Centre (176 Bobcaygeon Rd.)
- SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena (55 Parkside St.)

All waste disposal sites will be open on and will operate on Sunday hours. Our offices and facilities will resume regular hours on Tuesday, August 5, 2025.

COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (Council Chambers, 7 Milne St., Minden) and with electronic participation. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:
July 31- Regular Council Meeting
August 14 – Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

We are currently recruiting for the following vacancies:

- Student Arena Attendants
- Student Recreation Attendants
- Cultural Centre Relief Staff
- Seasonal Roads Labourer
- Casual Community Services Operator

MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE

- *Of Light and Life,* a new exhibit by world renowned artist Michael Dumas, is on display in the Agnes Jamieson Gallery until September 13. Copies of Michael's recently published book Algonquin Legacy - The Art of Michael Dumas will also be available for sale in the Gallery.
- The Minden Hills Museum and Heritage Village and Nature's Place are Tuesday to Saturday from 10 am – 4 pm! Daily drop-in programs are offered at 11 am. Coming up this week: Thursday – weave with a cardboard loom, Friday – Toddler Discovery Zone at 11 am and ice-cream making at 12 pm, Saturday – crayon wax art.
- Join us under the stars on Thursday, July 31 at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre for our first outdoor movie night of the summer! We will be presenting *The Adventures of Greyfriars* Bobby (2005). Don't forget your lawn chair, blanket, and snacks! If it rains, the event will still take place indoors in the Welch Room. Admission is by donation. No pre-registration is required.

For information on all the programs and exhibits offered at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre: culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca or call 705-286-3763.

BID OPPORTUNITIES

The Township of Minden Hills currently has the following tenders available:

- ENV 25-002 Construction of Scotch Line Transfer Station (submission deadline August 15, 2025).
- ADMIN 25-003 Development Approval Process (submission deadline August 22, 2025).

See Bid Opportunities on our website for more information. Lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

RECYCLING REMINDER

Please break down cardboard boxes and remove all contents (like plastic wrap, styrofoam, or packing materials) before placing them in the papers recycling bin.
Flattened boxes = more room in the bin. Clean, empty cardboard = better recycling.

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THE TOWNSHIP OF MINDEN HILLS
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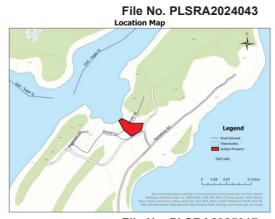
PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills has received applications to consider by-laws to stop up, close, and convey those parcels of land, being shoreline road allowances, more particularly described as follows:

1. **File No. PLSRA2024043**: Part of the original shore road allowance along the shore of Denna Lake, lying in front of 1010 Bunker Lane, located within Part Lot 7 & 8, Concession 11, Geographic Township of Lutterworth

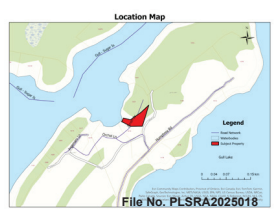
File No. PLSRA2024043

2. **File No. PLSRA2025017**: Part of the original shore road allowance along the shore of Gull Lake, lying in front of 1014 Orchid Lane, located within Part Lot 19, Concession 7, Geographic Township of Lutterworth



File No. PLSRA2025017

3. **File No. PLSRA2025018**: Part of the original shore road allowance along the shore of Gull Lake, lying in front of 1021 Zenith Drive, located within Part Lot 19, Concession 7, Geographic Township of Lutterworth



File No. PLSRA2025018

The above noted applications are available for inspection in the Planning Department located at 7 Milne Street, Minden, Ontario by appointment only. Additional information may be obtained by contacting the undersigned.

AND TAKE NOTICE should you wish to provide comments with respect to the above referenced applications, please submit in writing those comments to the undersigned not later than end of day on August 29, 2025.

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE any person who claims that their land will be prejudicially affected is asked to contact the undersigned not later than August 29, 2025.

AND TAKE FURTHER NOTICE if deemed advisable, By-laws giving effect to the proposed closures and conveyances will be passed by the Council for the Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills. Please note that a Council meeting to consider By-laws for the above referenced applications will be scheduled at a later date following the requisite commenting period.

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Clerical Assistant, Building, By-Law and Planning
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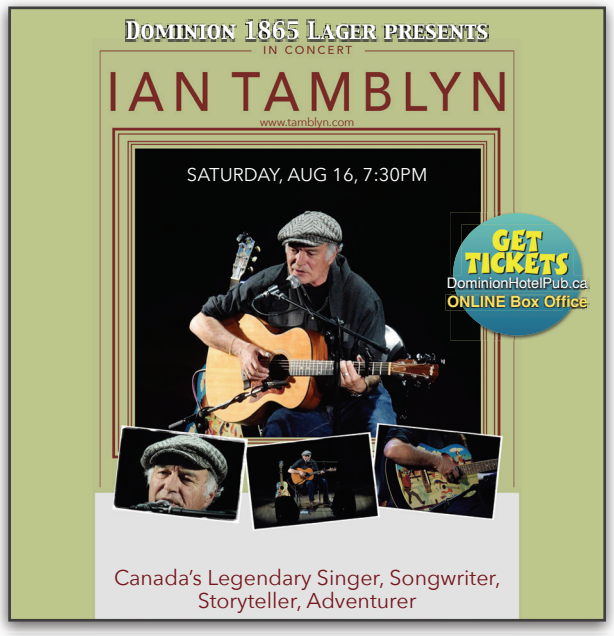

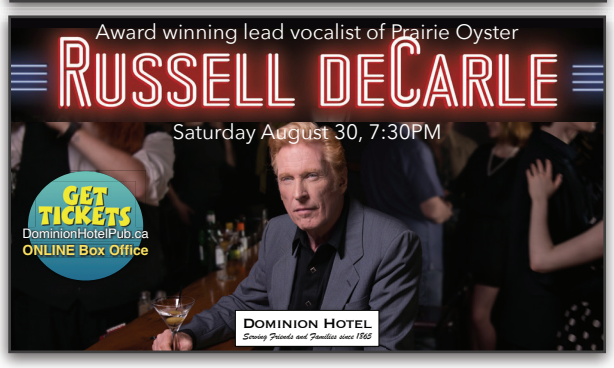

Dominion Hotel This Week

Tue Jul 29	5:00	Tiki Tuesday	Heart & Soul
Fri Aug 1	7:30	Open Mic	Open Mic with Dave and Joe
Sun Aug 3	4:00	Caesar Sunday Happy Hour	Chris Smith
Tue Aug 5	5:00	Tiki Tuesday	Jeff Moulton
Thu Aug 7	6:00	Gord Kidd Solo	Gord Kidd Solo
Sat Aug 9	6:00	Saturday Night Live	North of 7
Tue Jul 29	5:00	Tiki Tuesday	Heart & Soul

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Jim Blake: a career of connections and colour

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

We recently had the opportunity to sit down with Jim Blake, and explore his past stories while recollecting his time with HCDC. /submitted

Most people in this community know Jim Blake.

If you don't know him personally, you've likely reaped the benefits of some project he has worked on over the years in the Haliburton Highlands.

There are many.

So many, that when he retired from his work with Haliburton County Development Corporation (HCDC) early in the summer, they hosted "Jim Blake Day" on July 9.

Hundreds showed up. They needed to split it into two sessions; morning and afternoon, with the community all coming together to say one simple phrase to the man who did it all: thank you.

While he's tackled many a project over the years, and the community is quick to sing their praises, Blake primarily likes to keep a low profile. He credits the work to the committees, the volunteers, the organizations he has been a part of.

But on a muggy July day, one of those days that teases at the hints of a thunderstorm to come, I found the perfect recipe to hear his side: hot coffee, an early morning, and a lake.

And finally, Jim shared his stories. A story-teller by nature; armed with coffee and cream to the rim, he asked: "Where should I start?"

"The beginning," I said.

Now let's clear one thing up; Jim Blake had a wealth of stories before he first called Haliburton 'home' many years ago. "My dad was a numbers guy and my mom was a people person," he laughed, citing his parents as the primary reason he is able to see the world through dichotomizing lenses: clear-cut numbers and whimsical colours.

Not many can see both. Generally, the world is divided into two frames of thought; those who apply logic, reason, structure, and rigidity, and those who see swirls of colour, dashes of light, and paint outside the lines. A right and left side of the brain.

Blake uses both, in synonymity. He trained as a visual artist before working at the YWCA, where he had a holistic approach of focusing on the spirit, the mind, and the body. Through the Y, Blake ran camps for kids with learning disabilities across Ontario and the West Coast, with a priority of play on the forefront. When the opportunity came up to build an Adventure Playground in Toronto, Blake worked with a committee to formalize a grant application; one of his first forays into the world of grantwriting, and the politics and policies of project development.

When he arrived in Haliburton seeking a change of scenery and a different pace of life, he started doing consultancy work with Haliburton School of Art and Design. "I was able to do lots of neat projects through that," said Blake, sipping his coffee. "We started doing some big things to make the arts more visible."

Blake's career in Haliburton largely took off from his eagerness to say 'yes' every time a new project crossed his path.

One of these projects was none other than the Sculpture Forest. Now quite literally a world-renowned destination, known for its incredible sculptures and tranquil surroundings, the outdoor art gallery started with a sprout of an idea. Inspired by Grizedale Forest in England, the thought was presented to Blake with the question of "why can't we do this here?"

Using that numbers side of his brain, Blake went to work applying for a grant to get the idea growing. This was prior to his work with HCDC, and he submitted the grant to the organization, seeking financial support for three sculptures. He was successful in his application, and just like that, the seed started to sprout.

The gears were turning in Blake's mind at this point. "I think the arts should be much broader than what they are," he said.

At this point in Haliburton history, the arts weren't necessarily seen as a community economic driver. "There is a difference between economic development and community economic development," noted Blake. "Economic development is the business side, and community development is the social stuff. The softer things. You have to pay attention to the social, the cultural, the environmental stuff. It's all a part of it."

Connections. That's the key. In his brain, in his life, in his community.

The years of Jim Blake's career get a little fuzzy. Not because of age or time, but because of the breadth of accomplishments. He worked with individuals in the community to develop the original Arts Council in 2005; an evolution of an arts committee that previously sat with HCDC. Through the Arts Council, he facilitated the connections between artists of all mediums: music, theatre, visual arts, sculptures, to band together. "It made sense to have an organizing body to bring people together in all the arts," he mused.

Through the Arts Council, talks of Easter Ontario Development Program (EODP) funding could become available, and Blake was tasked with following it. Once again, his eagerness to say 'yes' shone through, and a variety of arts-based programs still stand today because of the seed funding Blake secured through the EODP programs.

Once it was apparent that his heart was in the arts and his mind was built for grantwriting, Blake was a shoe-in for the role of economic development consultant with HCDC. "I was just at the right place at the right time," Blake chuckled. "They could see that the knowledge and skill-set I brought with me was eclectic. And what a great opportunity to learn. To work with the movers of a community."

Connections. That's the key. In his brain, in his life, in his community.

This is the tip of the iceberg. And really, the story was supposed to be about his time with HCDC. How he was a facilitator for countless strategic planning sessions that propelled the organization forward. How he worked with a committee to bring the first fibre internet to Haliburton County, when he noticed the many gaps residents felt. How he supported the creation of cultural plans for each municipality, allowing everyone to feel seen, feel heard, feel understood. How he garnered the idea of a business incubator forward, which now exists as a thriving community hub dedicated to sparking creativity and connection. How he supported organizations such as Point in Time in their grantwriting for the development of the Youth Wellness Hub, a destination that has helped hundreds of youth find their place in the world. How he has worked with innumerable businesses and organizations to secure funding for growth, adding tangible variety, colour, and flavour to our communities.

Whew, that's one long paragraph.

But still, only the tip of the iceberg.

It's all connected.

As our coffees near the bottom of the vintage mugs Blake keeps at his cottage, and the sun that was hiding on the horizon has begun to cascade over the trees above our heads, Blake looked back at his legacy with HCDC. "It's all about who you know," he said. "It's all about the team, the people." He gives a tremendous amount of credit to the staff and board of HCDC, and is excited to watch the next steps take shape for the organization. Blake noted his particular elation around Heather Reid stepping into his former role with the organization. "Heather and I have worked together on lots of initiatives over the years," he said. "She brings a wealth of experience, talent and community knowledge to this role."

And while he has officially retired from his full-time job, the confetti settled from Jim Blake Day, he's not going anywhere anytime soon. He will continue wearing his volunteer hat, as president of the Haliburton County Community Co-operative, co-chair of the U-Links Centre for Community Based Research, curator of the Sculpture Forest, chair of the Glebe Park and museum committee, to name a few. "I always like to ask 'what can I actually do'," he said. "What can I do to make a difference?"

And he has. Fuelled by connections. In his brain, in his life, in his community.

Our coffee now gone, as the sun bakes our shoulders with a hint of a thunderstorm to come, Blake looks out to the lake, ready for the next chapter.

Midnight Madness: sweet treats and tasty traditions

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

It's been a family tradition for decades, and a sure sign of summer.

Haliburton's annual Midnight Madness event is slated for Friday, Aug. 1 this year, and will run from 7 p.m. until 11 p.m."It's a great event," said Brandon Nimigon, the president of the BIA, who hosts the event. "We are really trying to make it a lot bigger, with a lot more businesses involved."

Currently over 120 businesses in Haliburton Village are a part of the business improvement association, a requirement for stores within the catchment area. "Everyone in the BIA is welcome to be a part of Midnight Madness," said Nimigon, "but it's not required."

But for many, it's a huge draw. And has been since its inception in 1982. The event brings in thousands from all over the county and beyond, with many marking their calendars to signify the tradition. Nimigon noted that this year, the typical road closures that have traditionally spanned a block through the downtown core, will be expanded to include a portion of a second block, up past Castle Antiques and Poquito Loco, who will be holding live music sessions.

The BIA will also be offering their annual banana split stand, "which is always a busy line," laughed Nimigon, as well as chalk drawing from Pride in the Highlands, live music from Gord Kidd, and of course, beef on a bun from Haliburton Rotary,

The event also allows businesses to offer discounts and deals to attendees. "It's a really big night for the town," said Nimigon. "Everyone in town is out there."

Midnight Madness 2025 kicks off at 7 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 1 in the heart of Haliburton Village.

People line up to get their hands on free banana splits from the BIA during a past Midnight Madness event. /file

Matt Duchene tournament results

Team and On Course Competition Winners:

1st Low Gross and Overall Winners:
Rob Chapman, Phil Jung, Gary Brohman, Walt McKechnie

1st Low Gross Mixed/Ladies Winners:
Jesse Johnson, Jamie Luck, Glenda Austen, Troy Austen

2nd Low Gross Winners:
Dan Marsden, Dave Marsden, Dan Miller, Kevin Smith

Most Honest Team Winners:
Trisha Bradley, Patrick Bradley, Stacy Tasikas, Greg Tasikas

Women's Longest Drive Winner:
Nicole Baumgartner

Men's Longest Drive Winner:
Owen Flood

Women's Closest to the Pin Winner:
Nicole Baumgartner

Men's Closest to the Pin Winner:
Jim Stewart

Submitted

The overall winners of the Matt Duchene Golf Tournament, held in support of the Haliburton Highlands Health Services, from left, Rob Chapman, Phil Jung, Gary Brohman, Walt McKechnie. /submitted

Navigating the tourism landscape in the county

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

A disciple of Linda Coneybeare, Machenzie Vasey remains Haliburton County's sole travel agent. With starting her position in 2019, Vasey's fortunate maternity leave in 2020 meant that she did not have to weather through the COVID-19 pandemic. With strict travel restrictions, mandatory vaccinations, and uncertainties with travel, the tourism industry took a massive hit during the uncertain chapter.

"It was terrible," said Vasey. "People were afraid to travel."

Vasey says that it was a nightmare scenario for Coneybeare, but the transition post-maternity leave has been rather smooth. Returning to work in 2022, some of her clients had questions, but the fears associated with travelling during the pandemic have seemed to fade away.

Local residents may remember Coneybeare's office in Haliburton. Nowadays, Vasey works as a travel agent entirely from her home.

This year, Vasey says that she has had a large number of clients booking for the winter. She says that the fear of price increases may be an explanation for the early bookings.

In the past, Mexico was the most popular winter destination for people fleeing from the snow. Currently, beaches across Mexico are becoming covered in Sargassum seaweed. The seaweed has benefitted from an influx in nutrients in the Sargasso sea, within the Atlantic ocean. The area in which a majority of the seaweed grows is colloquially referred to as the "Great Atlantic Sargassum belt". Upwelling and nutrient-rich runoff from the Amazon River have combined to become the perfect growing season. While the seaweed is highly beneficial for marine life, it is perfect to house jellyfish and other stinging and biting critters before being washed up on Caribbean resorts. The seaweed cannot hurt you by itself, but does have a highly unpleasant smell as it decays, is considered unsightly by many, and reduces the enjoyability of swimmers.

This year, the warm replacement for Mexico has been Jamaica, says Vasey. While the seaweed is still present in Jamaica, but she says that the volume of seaweed is lesser than in Mexico.

Travel advisories issued by the Canadian Government about Mexico have also played a part in reducing visitors. Advisories warn visitors about violence, organized crime, and kidnappings.

Last year, Mexico was the number one visited county of Vasey's clients. The runner-up was Antigua.

The age of Vasey's clients range greatly. Currently, she is helping a group of women in their 20s plan a trip to Panama. Her oldest clients are in their 80s.

The majority of her clients are from Haliburton County. With the office being located in Haliburton for so many years, customers have continued to return to her, built on their reputation and quality of service. Now running her business from her home, Vasey has received new clientele out of the blue after they had found her services listed online.

> ***"With the ongoing issues with the U.S., in 2025, many Canadians have set an intention to travel locally or within Canada this summer"***
>
> – Kasey Rogerson, Director of Industry Development, OHTO

Vasey's clients come to her to take care of all matters regarding their vacation. All the hotels, day trips, travel, and anything you can think of is taken care of through the travel service.

"It's very time consuming,'" said Vasey.

While a lot of her destinations involve all-inclusive resorts, Vasey is capable of planning any trip imaginable and taking care of any issues that arise. One couple that was taking a cruise missed an Alaskan port of call. Vasey found the service to transport them to the next port. Another couple, who visited Mexico every year, was convinced by Vasey to visit Portugal. With a similar climate and beautiful beaches, the couple now swear by the destination and want to go back every year.

"It is for your peace of mind," said Vasey. "I am here for you before and during your trip."

While she loves all aspects of travelling, destinations have become her favourite trip to plan.

"I love doing destination weddings," said Vasey. "I have done so many that it has kind of become my thing."

Unlike a typical wedding, destination weddings allow your guests to make the event a week (or more) longer experience.

Vasey says that Indonesia is a hidden gem destination.

"There is so much to see and do," said Vasey.

From beaches, to ancient temples, to viewing monkeys, and waterfalls, Vasey highly recommends considering Indonesia for your next vacation. She says that one downside is the connecting flights needed to get into the smaller islands, but with a travel agent, everything would be taken care of for you.

While Vasey specializes in international travel, the Ontario Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO) says that staycations have remained highly popular for Ontario's tourism industry.

"The appetite for staycations has not diminished since the pandemic - it's grown," said OHTO executive director Nicole Whiting. "This summer many Canadians have committed to remain close to home for their holidays and that has translated into a resurgence in interest in our region as a vacation and daytrip destination. In Ontario's Highlands, we're seeing that interest reflected in real-time digital engagement that translates into more itinerary downloads, more operator referrals, and continued demand for meaningful, local experiences."

Those that were given the opportunity to explore local towns in Ontario such as Haliburton seemed to be repeating their local travels.

"With the ongoing issues with the U.S. in 2025, many Canadians have set an intention to travel locally or within Canada this summer and we have seen that reflected in feedback from accommodators and destinations," said Kasey Rogerson, director of industry development for OHTO.

A recent consumer study conducted by Context Research Group in collaboration with Destination Ontario says that nine out of 10 residents in Ontario have plans for an overnight trip within the province. As for our neighbours to the south, only one out of four Ontarians plan on venturing across the border. Over 80 per cent of respondents to their survey said that they are either neutral or feeling positive about visiting Americans.

One thing is for sure, Haliburton County's hospitality and the beautiful nature continues to bring tourists to the area. While some choose to fly away to warmer climates, you can assure that they always come back home.

SUDOKU SOLUTION

8	9	5	3	1	7	6	4	2
2	7	1	9	6	4	3	8	5
3	6	4	5	2	8	7	9	1
9	5	8	1	4	6	2	3	7
7	3	2	8	5	9	4	1	6
1	4	6	7	3	2	9	5	8
6	2	3	4	8	1	5	7	9
5	1	7	6	9	3	8	2	4
4	8	9	2	7	5	1	6	3

Bring the kids to Head Lake Park for Haliburton Rotary Summerfest

From 4 to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 5, Head Lake Park in Haliburton will be filled with free games and activities for kids of all ages to enjoy. Once again, local businesses, clubs, and service organizations have partnered with the Rotary Club to create an amazing day of fun for families.

This year's features include two giant inflatables sponsored by Century 21, the Re/Max hot air balloon, animal interactions with Zoo to You and Turtle Guardians, craft animals from Haliburton Home Hardware, activity tables from Point in Time, Nine Square presented by the Bridge, stand up paddle boarding by Algonquin Outfitters, frisbee golf by Abbey Gardens, and so much more.

In addition to all the activities, there will be free cotton candy and popcorn. Free ice cream will also be served starting at 5 p.m. while supplies last. Pockets the Clown will also be in the park doing her elaborate face paintings.

Music in the Park will run from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., starting with local opening act Tom Oliver, followed by Adverse Conditions. All these activities are free to enjoy!

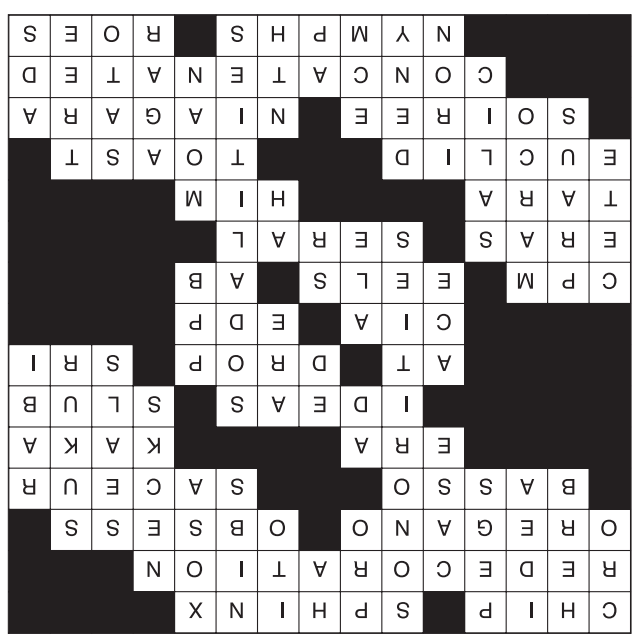
The Rotary Club will be selling its famous Beef on a Bun and hot dogs during the afternoon and evening events till supplies run out. A highlight of the evening will be the annual Rotary Car Draw at 8 p.m. at the band shelter. If you still need tickets, you can get them from a Rotarian, at www.haliburtonrotary.ca, or Glecoff's Family Store.

Don't miss out! This promises to be a fabulous day of free fun brought to you by the Haliburton Rotary Club and local community partners.

For more information, email haliburtonrotary@gmail.com.

Submitted

CROSSWORD ANSWERS



Minden's infamous "shoe tree" pictured on July 24, 2025. /ADAM FRISK staff

Sole searching: 'shoe tree' mystery one step closer to being solved

ADAM FRISK
Journalist

It's been around for decades and has survived harsh winters, ice storms and drought. But its sole purpose still remained a mystery. Until now.

Minden's infamous "shoe tree" has been a popular roadside attraction for visitors to the area for many years but the lore and history of the tree remained unclear, leaving many stumped as to why adorning shoes to a tree is a thing people do and how it came to be in the first place.

"I know almost nothing about it," Kelly Outram, who lives a shoe's throw away from the tree, said in a July 22 interview. "I just know it has been there for over 30 years, at least."

Located on South Lake Road, the tree, at times, can be hard to spot but it seems that it has become some sort of an urban legend with visitors actively seeking it out.

"People are stopping all the time," Outram said. "If I'm just hanging out doing yard work at my house, I hear people pull up to the shoe tree on a regular basis in the summertime. I always think it's someone coming up my driveway.

"But then I look and I'm like 'Oh it's just someone hanging shoes in the shoe tree or taking a picture," he explained.

Hundreds of shoes have been either nailed to the tree or tied together and flung over branches. There's even a wooden board with 10 pairs of shoes nailed to it with a last name painted on it, like a plaque of sorts, hammered into the tree, about 30 feet from the ground.

Outram, who ironically is an arborist, estimates the large white pine to be about 90 years old and to be relatively healthy with all things considered.

"It splits into two stems about 60 feet up and one of them is dead so it's going to fall down and either land in the ditch or on the road one day," he said. "But the other stem is healthy so I hope the tree continues for a long time."

Outram doesn't seem to think the shoes are killing the tree but "they're not great for it."

"People say copper nails can poison a tree but using normal nails, it could be an avenue for disease over time," the arborist said. "But considering the tree is about 90 years old, it hasn't affected it terribly."

As for the lore, the arborist said he doesn't have a clue.

"I feel like it's something quirky someone just started doing and other people, they see it and they're like 'Oh I should do that too, that's neat,'" he said. "It might have been one family with a lot of shoes who started it, making it look like it's a happening situation."

> ***"I feel like it's something quirky someone just started doing and other people, they see it and they're like 'Oh I should do that too, that's neat ...'"***
>
> — Kelly Outram

Curious to find out more about the shoe tree mystery, Outram decided to reach out to someone who knows someone who said they know something about the tree. He said he was told that shoes were being tossed or hammered into the tree since 1976 and that there was another shoe tree across the road but people had complained about it.

But why were shoes being tossed into the tree in the first place?

Minden Hills Cultural Centre's Nadine Papp may have the answer.

"So the story I was told years ago was that there was a young child starting school here in Minden, in kindergarten," Papp said. "I think he was a little bit anxious about being away and not necessarily knowing how it all works. So for reassurance his mother decided to hammer a pair of his shoes to a tree to kind of give him a signal that he's getting close to home."

The shoes were meant to act as a marker for the child to get ready to get off the school bus so he wouldn't miss his stop on South Lake, Papp said.

"That's the story that I heard, and it was in the mid '80s," she said. "I may have been told the story in the late '80s though, it was many years ago.

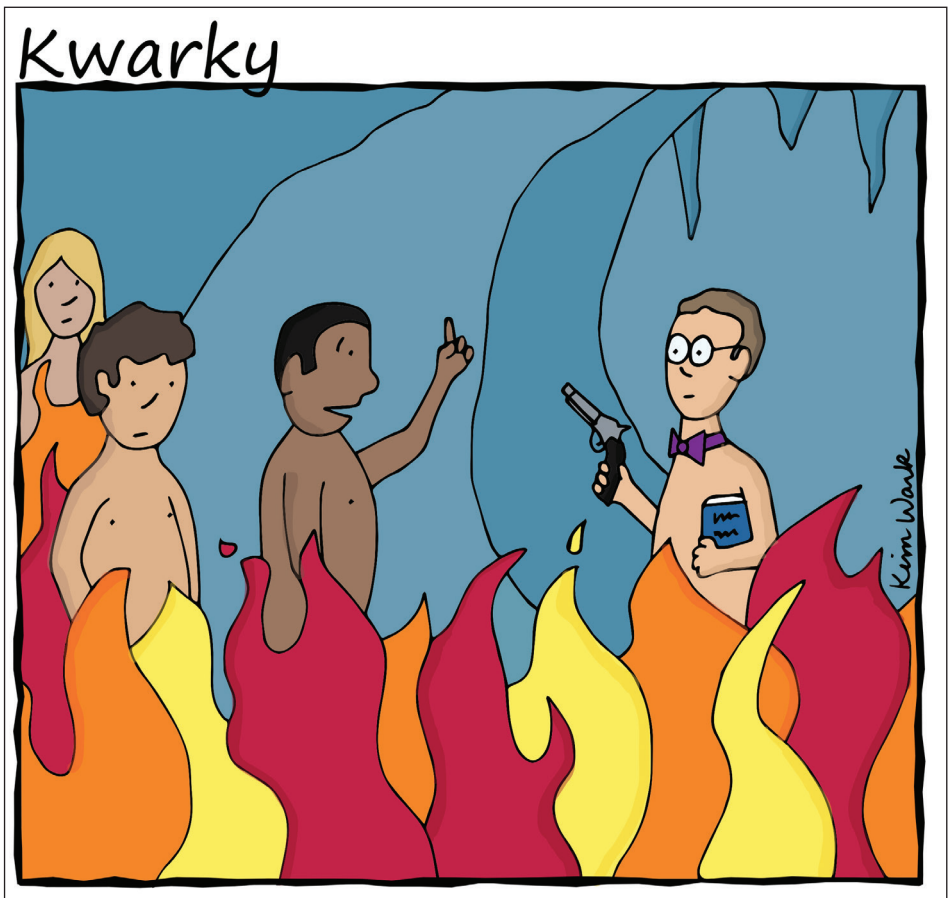
"So that was the story I heard, but I like it though, you know," Papp said.

The county is dotted with similar trees decorated with various footwear but the tree on South Lake Road seems to be the one that attracts the most kicks.

As for the tree being an eyesore for those in the area?

"No, not at all, I think it's neat!" Outram said. "It's like a landmark, it's novel."

Do you have a story to share about the shoe tree or know the lore behind it? Drop me a line at adam@haliburtonpress.com.



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1		6			2		5	
	2				1			
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	8		2		5		6	3

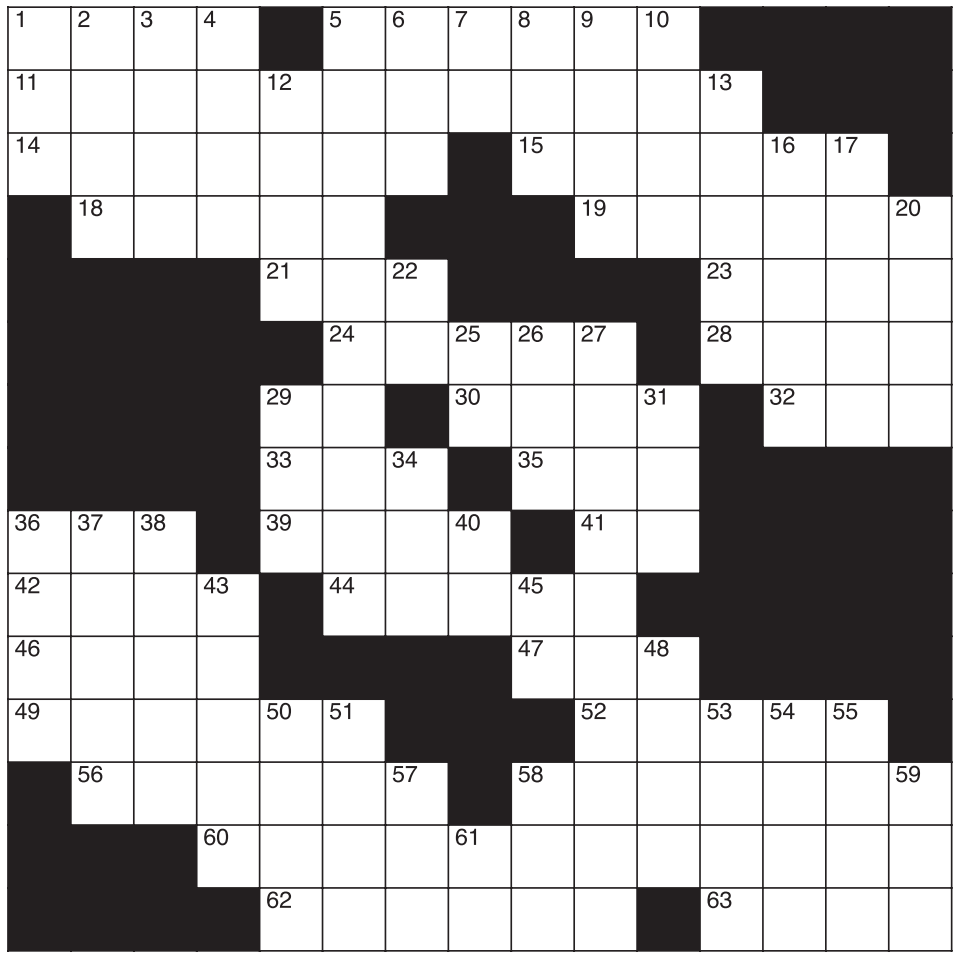
Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers on page 16



CLUES ACROSS
1. Popular potato snack
5. Guards the Pyramids
11. Furnish anew
14. Herb
15. Preoccupy the mind continually
18. The lowest adult male singing voice
19. NATO commander (abbr.)
21. A major division of geological time
23. New Zealand parrot
24. Notions
28. Lump in yarn
29. Indicates position
30. Lose hold of
32. Hindu honorific
33. Former OSS
35. Electronic data processing
36. Cost per mile
39. Snake-like fish
41. They start the alphabet
42. Taylor SwiftÕs tour
44. Intermediate ecological stage
46. Scarlett's home
47. Of he
49. Ohio city
52. Breakfast item
56. An evening party
58. __ Falls
60. Linked together
62. Mythological spirits
63. Small Eurasian deer

CLUES DOWN
1. Earliest human form: __-Magnon man
2. Flavoring
3. Notion
4. Bundy and Fenwick are two
5. Qualities of sound
6. One who gets paid
7. Expresses surprise
8. O.J. trial judge
9. Pointed ends of pens
10. Shield bugs genus
12. Container for shipping
13. Upper body parts
16. Closes tightly
17. Nigerian World Heritage Site
20. Volcanic island in Fiji
22. Commercial
25. -__: denotes past
26. They __
27. Confraternities
29. A way to gain a point
31. Parts per billion (abbr.)
34. Brew
36. Badgers group
37. Sailing boat
38. __ Polo, explorer
40. Elder citizen (abbr.)
43. Frankish law code
45. Exclamation of surprise
48. Groan
50. It presses clothing
51. Do not allow
53. Gelatinous substance
54. Common Japanese surname
55. Present in nature
57. Electronic countermeasures
58. Last or greatest in an indefinitely large series
59. Commercials
61. News agency

Answers on page 16

Cheers!

In the last play of the Highlands Summer Festival season, a series of nuns take on the challenge of keeping their monastery open by making wine to sell in the show titled *Drinking Habits*. The hilarious farce of a show runs until Aug. 1 at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion. /TIM YANO staff photographer

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Mamma Mia!

The heat was no match for the full crowd that visited Kennisis Lake Marina this past weekend for ABBAMANIA, a show dedicated to the greatest hits of the all-star band, ABBA. The event had attendees on their feet for the duration of the show, with familiar tunes and blasts from the past. /TIM YANO staff photographer

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Yard Sale. **August 9 & 10. 9 - 2**. Tools, Furniture, and miscellaneous. **1200 Richie Falls Rd.**

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Corporation of the County of Haliburton is currently recruiting for Two (2)

Administrative Clerks

Reporting to the Executive Assistant, the Administrative Clerk provides a range of clerical and administrative support such as preparing meeting materials, taking minutes, maintaining filing systems in accordance with our records management program, maintaining accurate scheduling and calendar management.

This position reports to the County of Haliburton Administration Office, Monday - Friday, 8:30am – 4:30pm, 35 hours per week. The 2025 hourly rate for these unionized CUPE 1960 positions is $26.09 and includes participation in the OMERS defined benefit pension program and comprehensive, employer paid extended healthcare benefits.

Visit our website at www.haliburtoncounty.ca/careers for a detailed posting and job description. Forward your resume to shume@haliburtoncounty.ca no later than **4:30pm on August 15, 2025**.

We thank all who apply for this position; however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted. The County of Haliburton is an equal employer. Accommodation can be provided in all steps of the hiring process, please contact Human Resources for further details. In accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the information gathered will be used solely for the purpose of job selection.

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OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of
Smith (Nee Little)
Hollie Harriett Gwendolyn
(1943-2025)

As the result of infection complications and an aneurysm, Mom passed away on Monday July 14 at LakeRidge Health Oshawa.

Gwen is survived by her children Tyke (Jean) of Haliburton and Konnie Vandeburgt of Oshawa. She was Nana to Hayley, Emily, Alex, Holly, Mike, Ryker, and Carter. Greatgrandma to 10.

She was predeceased by her husband Bertram (2023), her daughter Kimberly (2015), and her son in-law Greg Rowe (2014).

Mom was born in Haliburton on Aug 31,1943 to Holly and Beatrice Little of Blairhampton. She is survived by her sister Marlene Currie (Don deceased) of Stratford and her youngest brother Alex Little (Zetta) Also of Blairhampton.

Predeceased by her siblings Ron, Joan, Darlene, Patricia, and Melville.

Mom found peace and enjoyment in her gardens, her home, and her church. She loved being a Nana, and Greatgrandma, her adoration for her grandchildren was immeasurable. Mom was sharp, witty, and unfaltering making her to be truly one of a kind. She also gained many lifelong friendships through her workplace of 30 years - Whitby Mental Health Hospital and also her place of worship, Whitby Free Methodist Church. She will be fondly remembered by all who were blessed to have known her.

You've earned your wings and I hope you fly high like you had no fear of heights.
Its not goodbye, its until we meet with you again.

Rest in the sweetest Peace
Little Lady
xoxo

Service will be held on Saturday Aug 9th @11am
Whitby Free Methodist Church
1916 Rossland Road East Whitby
Lunch to follow at the Smith family home
In Gwens Garden
All are welcome

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

THIS WEEK
After the Storm
Clean-up continues in wake of storm... see pages 3 to 7

FEATURE
DREAM HOUSE
Ferugsons build the perfect place on Drag Lake... see page 19

COUNTY LIFE
Getting the Goods
Popular country band is coming to the Rodeo

THE HALIBURTON COUNTY
ECHO
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TUESDAY, JULY 25, 1995 Vol. 113, No. 23 • 64 PAGES 75 cents (incl. GST)

Adding it all up:

Kennisis Lake tornado damage likely $5-million

by STEPHEN SHAW
Staff Reporter

The tornado that cut a swath through the Highlands last weekend left behind about $5-million damage to the Kennisis Lake alone.

As insurance adjusters tabulated claims reports, damage estimates began pouring into the Disaster Command Base at Kennisis Lake Marina showroom.

"The highest quote I've had so far was for a roof, car and property damages at $28,000," says Bill Elliott, lake association president and emergency relief co-ordinator .

"A lot of people are coming in with damage so extensive that they've just decided to bulldoze their whole area and sell it. A lot of people just don't want the hassle," said one resident.

The trail of destruction was likely the most severe damage in any area of the province, says Brian Donaldson, a municipal affairs senior advisor.

"It really takes you back to see the extent of the tree loss. It was incredible. It looks like a giant lawnmower came along and just cleared everything," says Donaldson, who surveyed the Kennisis and Redstone Lake areas in a plane last week. "In terms of the loss of trees, it's just devastating."

While the three tornadoes that ripped through south-central Ontario left many areas with equally substantial, if not more, structural ruin, the Highlands was likely the hardist hit region overall, he said.

"The damage was much more wide-spread. With the density of tree cover, I don't know how it could compare (to other areas)."

Provincial and municipal leaders are working to secure emergency financial assistance. The devastation in the Kennisis and Redstone Lake areas is unparalleled in the province because of the environmental loss,

See DYSART page 2

HOW NOW SPOTTED COW: Devin Hogg tentatively reaches out to pet a cow at the petting zoo at Stanhope Fun Day on Saturday. His younger brother, Ryan, was less shy, later going right up to the placid bovine. For more pictures of Fun Day, please turn to page 24.

Cuts a necessary evil: Hodgson

by MARTHA PERKINS
Editor

"If the debt keeps growing, we can't sustain any programs"

If Highlanders think the provincial government's spending cuts will be painful, then Chris Hodgson asks them to think of the alternatives.

"It doesn't help Haliburton County if the province of Ontario goes broke," the Conservative MPP said in a telephone interview after Friday's cost-cutting announcements. "If the debt keeps on growing, we can't sustain any programs."

Hodgson echoes many of the themes expressed by Premier Mike Harris and Ernie Eves, the Minister of Finance.

"It's an action plan instead of wringing our hands, which wasn't what we were elected to do. Most people expected us to (make cuts) and get at it," says Hodgson, who is also the new Minister of Natural Resources, Northern Development and Mines. (The Tories say the combined Ministry is one of the ways they're trying to put their own financial house in order.)

Leaving the debt to grow to an estimated $12-billion is "unacceptable..." Spending cuts are necessary because "we hit the tax wall and we can't continue to borrow money."

Right now the province annually pays $8-billion to pay its debt loans. That's $8-billion which isn't filtering through the economy, Hodgson says. "Maybe what we should be doing is saying 'what's the priority and how much money do we have?'"

The finance minister says the province doesn't have much. Revenues are lower than projected by the NDP in the spring, Eves said, and costs are higher. Without cuts, the deficit would be $1.4-billion more than expected. "We have to stop acting as if the problem was one of insufficient revenue."

Some of the cost-cutting initiatives, which total $1.9-billion, include:

- A 22% cut in welfare payments but with protection for seniors and the handicapped. Recipients will be allowed to work part-time so they can make up the difference. Payments will still be 10% higher than the national average, Eves said. In the past, in areas such as Haliburton County where more than 3.5% of the population depends on welfare, the province funded 100% on that portion of the cost instead of the usual 80%. Not any longer. But Eves said counties will recoup those costs through the reduced welfare payments.
- All social services falling under the Ministry of Community and Social Services will get a 2.5% funding cut on October 1, followed by a 5% cut for the next fiscal year.
- Employment equity, which didn't affect many local employers, and the advocacy commission will be scrapped.
- School boards will have to cut a combined $32-million from their budgets but the cuts can not affect classroom education. Colleges must cut $6.8-million and universities $16-million.
- All ministries will review their budgets for further cost savings. There will be other budget announcements in September. "Like all government spending, everything's on the table," Hodgson said.

See CUTS page 2

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Big Hawk Marina seeks speeding solution

THOMAS SMITH
Journalist

"One of the significant dangers that I have encountered is traffic in the marina, both to my safety and to pedestrians," said Chris Ewles, general manager of Millington's Big Hawk Lake Marina.

"As council and staff are aware the area surrounding Big Hawk Lake Marina is often seriously congested with canoeists, cottagers, marina staff and visitors," said Ewles.

Ewles also noted that bus loads of children attending summer camps frequent the area during the summer.

"Majority of people slow down when approaching the area and are respectful of walkers in the area," said Ewles. "However, we have on occasion some who don't and in particular one who is consistently multiple times a day going too fast driving through the area on purpose specifically exercising his right to drive at least the posted speed of 50 kilometres an hour."

To protect their customers and their staff, Big Hawk Marina seeks support from council to reduce the speed limit in the surrounding area, establish a community safety zone, have speed bumps, install a speed enforcement camera, stop sign, and a pedestrian crosswalk.

"I would like to stress that I do not feel reducing the speed alone will stop the problem and would like to urge council to at the very least reduce the speed but also consider at least one of the other suggestions as we cannot rely on physical OPP enforcement in this isolated area," said Ewles.

"I will admit that this is a very congested area," said AH Mayor Liz Danielsen. "I will say however, this is a joint responsibility. It is not a township's problem to solve, it is also the marina's."

"There is an aspect of buyer beware," said Danielsen. "When you buy a marina that is on the road, there is bound to be problems."

"We certainly cannot solve the problems of all the businesses in Algonquin Highlands."

"The detail is something that we will have to hear back from staff," said Deputy Mayor Jennifer Dailloux. "You are highlighting an issue that we have been having for quite some time."

Council said that they will have to bring the matter to their Public Works department and wait to hear from CAO Angie Bird.

"I know that this is a serious situation," said Danielsen. "This is somewhat unique, I see, in these circumstances. It is not something that is going to be resolved immediately."

Ewles says that the congestion of traffic in the area has been advantageous to himself and other staff's safety as it naturally forces people to slow down. He also said that there are 'murky waters' when it comes to township property, marina property, and crown land around their location.

"There are no sidewalks. There is no pedestrian-safe place to walk. There is not even really an adequate shoulder on either side that pedestrians have to go through," said Ewles.

He also notes that two out of every three dog owners at the marina do not have their dog on a leash.

"We don't have a sidewalk in Algonquin Highlands," replied Danielsen. "We don't even have a downtown area."

Danielsen recommended a survey of the marina's property to better assist with working to solve the issue.

Boshkung blues
Boshkung Brewing Co. in Minden continues to offer love music over the course of the summer, drawing crowds to their patios. Other restaurants and community organizations have also offered live music, with Minden becoming a hub for community experiences in the county. /TIM YANO staff photographer

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